

SIMULATED FLORAL BOUQUET AND METHOD OF MANUFACTURE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] Simulated floral bouquet of simulated flowers and method of manufacture wherein each flower is comprised of an infant care item configured to simulate a flower.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] There are few events in life that evoke a sense of the miraculous more than the birth of a first child. For the parents there may well be a feeling of inexpressible joy. Grandparents, siblings and friends have a long awaited the blessed happening. In the months preceding the birth, baby shower parties are often scheduled where friends and well wishers gather to celebrate the coming of a new life into this world. Most new parents have to start from scratch gathering infant care items such as baby socks, diapers, infant garments, and a host of other small items associated with the care of a new born baby. The shower parties often provide an opportunity to help create a layette for the newborn child. A common approach is to fill a basket with a collection of disparate wrapped and unwrapped infant care items, to resemble a fruit basket. Ribbons around the packaged items and bows on the bushel itself complete the baby shower gift basket. Baby shower baskets are extremely common, as is evidenced by an internet search for “baby shower basket” which revealed about 31,700 internet sites, all of which in one way or another offered an assemblage of items that would prove useful to a new parent. These baskets and their contents, though useful as gifts, provide no inherent novelty of a patentable nature, other than the basket structure that holds an aggregate of packaged and unpackaged baby care items. An example of a uniquely designed gift basket is typified by the Joyce Dennehy Design Patent No. D413,441 issued September 7, 1999. Its pleasing ornamental appearance made it

worthy of a patent. A baby shower display devise is shown and described in the DeBartola, et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,032,200 ('200) issued July 16, 1991. The invention in the '200 patent is directed to a method of fashioning a basic display structure by covering an inflated balloon with fibrous material that is made to harden by means of the application of glue which hardens when dried. Deflation of the balloon results in the creation of a hardened housing that may have a portion removed and allow baby shower items to be displayed therein.

[0003] Few things in life gladden the heart of a flower lover more than a floral bouquet, whether the floral bouquets are dandelions gathered together in the hand of a five year old as a gift or the bridal bouquet in the hands of a bride, as she moves in a wedding processional to the altar where vows are to be exchanged. What enchants the viewer is not so much the precise detail of each flower standing alone but the overall appearance of posies in the child's hand or the hands of the bride, symbolically covered, along with her face, as she approaches the altar and the groom.

[0004] In an elegantly simple manner, the instant invention provides a simulated bouquet of infant care items wherein the identity of each infant care item is obscured when first viewed, because each infant care item has been configured to simulate a flower.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The invention is directed to a simulated floral bouquet, where each flower is an infant care item configured to simulate a flower.

[0006] The floral bouquet is comprised of a plurality of infant care items, each configured to simulate a flower. Each simulated flower is secured to a support structure and the support structures are gathered together to simulate a floral bouquet of infant care items. The support structure of each simulated flower is gathered together with the bases of all the support structures by means of a support element. The support element may be a mass of material that may be readily engaged by a base of each support structure. The infant care items that are configured to simulate a flower may include such diverse items as diapers, socks, infant garments, etc.

[0007] It is therefore a primary object of the invention to provide a simulated floral bouquet of infant care items, each configured to simulate a flower.

[0008] Another object of the invention is to provide a method of making a simulated flower by configuring infant care items to simulate a flower secured to a simulated stem.

[0009] The invention further contemplates a method of manufacturing individual simulated flowers and floral bouquets where the flowers are derived from infant care items configured as flowers. The method of manufacture of a single simulated flower broadly involves the following steps:

- providing an infant care item;
- providing an elongated support structure to simulate a stem;
- securing the infant care item to an end of the elongated support structure;
- configuring the infant care item to simulate a flower on a stem

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] The description set forth above, as well as other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will be more fully appreciated by referring to the detailed description and the drawings that follow. The description is the presently preferred, but nonetheless illustrative, embodiment in accordance with the present invention, when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings:

[0011] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a simulated floral bouquet embodying a preferred embodiment of the invention;

[0012] FIGS. 2 through 8 illustrate the steps required to take an infant care garment and configure the infant care garment to simulate a flower on a support structure;

[0013] FIGS. 9 through 12 illustrate the steps required to take a pair of infant socks and configure the infant socks to simulate a flower on a support structure;

[0014] FIGS. 13 through 16 illustrate the steps required to take an infant diaper and configure the diaper to simulate a flower on a support structure;

[0015] FIG. 17 is a perspective view of several simulated flowers having elongated support structures shown inserted into a mass of material having a block shape that is shown positioned in the middle of a baby blanket;

[0016] FIG. 18 is a perspective view of the block shaped mass of material of FIG. 17 with the blanket of FIG. 17 shown partially wrapping the block within the blanket.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0017] Reference is now made to FIG. 1 which illustrates a simulated floral bouquet 10 that is comprised of a plurality of infant care items, three of which 20, 30 and 40 are referenced. Each of the infant care items 20, 30, 40 have been configured to simulate a flower. A visual inspection of FIG. 1 reveals eleven simulated flowers intended to represent a bouquet of three different kinds of simulated flowers represented by the simulated flowers 20, 30 and 40.

[0018] At first glance the simulated floral bouquet of FIG. 1 leaves one with an overall impression of a floral bouquet of different types of simulated flowers gathered together in a base 50 in a manner to be described more fully herein after. Also evidenced in FIG. 1 are many curled ribbons, such as ribbons 51, 52 and crumpled tissue paper 53 that are placed in the bouquet to visually hide support structures for the infant care simulated flowers as will be described more fully herein after.

[0019] Attention is now directed to FIGS. 2 to 8 which illustrate the sequential fabrication of a simulated flower 20 seen in FIG. 1 and again in FIG. 8.

[0020] Turning now to FIG. 2, an infant T-shirt 21/diaper cover of a conventional design having short sleeves 22, 23 is shown spread out. This type of T-shirt is frequently called a "onesie". In FIG. 3 it will be observed that the sleeves 22, 23 have been folded back upon the T-shirt toward a center line 24 of the T-shirt 21, as shown.

[0021] FIG. 4 depicts the T-shirt 21 folded along the centerline 24 of FIG. 3 to create the oblong appearance of the folded T-shirt 21 in this figure.

[0022] Turn now to FIG. 5, which shows an elongated support structure 24, here shown as a rod 18 with a base 19. The rod 18, which functions to simulate a flower stem, is secured as shown in a region adjacent an edge 27 of the folded T-shirt 21. A

piece of transparent adhesive tape 25 is shown being applied by a finger of the hand 26. It is to be understood that the manner and means by which the rod 18 is secured to the folded T-shirt 21 may be of any suitable adhesive tape, roughened surfaced rod or a rod covered with adhesive which will allow the rod 18 to be rotated as shown in FIG. 6 by arrow 28, thereby causing the folded T-shirt 21 to be wound upon rod 18, as shown. FIG. 7 shows the folded T-shirt 21 almost completely rolled up around the end of the rod 18. The rolled up T-shirt takes on a generally cylindrical shape. FIG. 8 shows the rolled, generally cylindrically shaped T-shirt having been wrapped with a flexible element, here shown as ribbon 29, to thereby reduce the cylindrical diameter of the rolled T-shirt in the region of the rolled T-shirt, as shown in this figure. The wrapping of the rolled T-shirt, as just described, causes the other end of the rolled T-shirt to expand, thereby simulating petals of an opening flower 20.

[0023] Another species of the invention is shown in FIGS. 9 to 12. In this species of the invention the infant care item is a pair of infant socks 31, 32. In order to configure the socks 31, 32 into a simulated flower 30, sock 32 is inserted into sock 31, to create a nested sock pair, as shown in FIG. 10. Attention is now directed to FIG. 11 where it will be observed that an elongated support structure 24' is comprised of a rod 18' that simulates a flower stem. The rod 18' has a base 19'. The rod 18' is shown positioned in a region of the foot section 33 of the nested socks 31, 32, adjacent an edge 27'. The rod 19' may be secured by adhesive tape 25 to the nested sock pair 31, 32 in the same manner as was shown and described in FIG. 5 with the folded infant T-shirt garment 21. The manner in which the support structure is secured to the infant care item may be of any suitable means. Although not shown in a separate figure, the foot section 33 of the nested sock pair 31, 32 is rolled upon an upper end of the rod 18', which forms a generally cylindrically shaped foot section 33, where a flexible element 29' has been wound around to reduce the cylindrical diameter of the rolled foot section. When the entire floral bouquet 10, as shown in FIG. 1, is viewed as a whole, the nested sock pair 30 takes on the appearance of a daffodil.

[0024] Yet another species of the invention is illustrated in FIGS. 13 to 16. The infant care item involved in this species is a diaper 41. The diaper 41 is shown enlarged in this figure. In a manner similar to the infant T-shirt 21 of FIG. 2, the diaper 41 is shown flattened and spread out in FIG. 14. Once again an elongated

support structure 24" comprised of a rod 18" is shown with its upper end in the process of being secured to the diaper 41 by means of adhesive tape 25" in a region of the diaper adjacent an edge 27" of the diaper 41. FIG. 15 depicts the diaper 41 almost fully rolled upon the rod 18". Note that the generally cylindrical shape of the diaper 41 rolled on rod 18" has a flexible element 29" wound around it to reduce the cylindrical diameter of the rolled diaper 41, which causes the other end of the rolled diaper 41 to expand, thereby simulating petals of an opening flower. In FIG. 16 an enlarged image of the infant care item 40 is shown configured as a simulated flower. Note also in FIG. 1 that the simulated flower 40 is shown disposed in about the middle of the bouquet 10.

[0025] Turning now to FIG. 17 there is shown a support element 51 disposed in the middle of an infant care blanket 62. The support element 51 is shown with simulated flowers 20, 30, 40 having elongated support structures 18, 18', 18" embedded in the support element 51. The support element 51 may be made of any suitable mass of material that is of a nature that will allow, for example, the rod ends 19, 19', 19" of the simulated rod stems 18, 18' and 18" to engage it in a piercing manner. The support element 51 is shown here in the form of a block. It is to be understood that the role and function of the support element 51 is to gather together the bases 19, 19', 19" of each of the rods 18, 18' and 18" of the support structures 24, 24', 24". The invention also contemplates as falling within the scope of the appended claims any type of support element that will allow the bases 19, 19', 19" and the support structures 24, 24', 24" to be gathered together. Accordingly the gathering together of a simulated floral bouquet embodying the invention may be accomplished by wrapping the simulated stems in floral wrapping paper prior to their being placed in a box or container for safe transport.

[0026] It should also be understood that a number of infant care items such as a bottle brush, a stuffed animal, a pacifier to name a few may be included with simulated floral bouquets embodying the invention. Florists would also find significant utility in clustering a number of individual infant care simulated flowers in flower arrangements being sent to new mothers and fathers.

[0027] Though the invention has been described with respect to a pair of specific embodiments, many variations and modifications will immediately become apparent

to those skilled in the art. It is therefore the intention that the appended claims be interpreted as broadly as possible, in view of the prior art, to include such variations and modifications.